

## Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

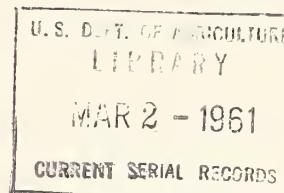


A280.39  
m 34 Am  
Cop. 2



Growth Through Agricultural Progress

## FOOD CONSUMPTION IN THE WEST



Reprinted From  
The National Food Situation  
October 1957

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE  
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS DIVISION

## FOOD CONSUMPTION IN THE WEST 1/

This is the final article of a series of 4 on regional household food markets, based on the findings of the 1955 Household Food Consumption Survey. 2/ Food consumption patterns of households in the West, 3/ measured by consumption and expenditure per person for individual foods and groups of foods, for the most part were similar to patterns of households in the other regions. The patterns are described by means of averages for households grouped according to degree of urbanization, and according to family income. These two factors, along with household size, are considered the major influences on food consumption and expenditures. The effect of differences in household size is largely eliminated by using per person rates calculated from the household averages given in the published reports on the survey.

### Urbanization and Income of Households in the West

In the West a higher proportion of the household population lived in urban areas than in the other regions except the Northeast, as seen in the following tabulation:

<u>Region</u>	<u>Percentage in urbanization category</u>		
	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural nonfarm</u>	<u>Farm</u>
West	70	21	9
Northeast	72	24	4
North Central Region	59	26	15
South	46	35	19

The proportion of households in each urbanization category influenced average rates of consumption and expenditures for food. Urban households generally have higher average money incomes and use less home-produced food.

Of all urban households in the U. S., those in the West had the highest average money income after income taxes. The same was true for western farm households among all farm households in the U. S., but rural nonfarm incomes in the West averaged lower than rural nonfarm incomes in the Northeast and the North Central Region.

A word of caution is in order concerning use of data for the West from the 1955 survey. There may be greater variability in consumption rates within the West than within the other regions because of the wide geographic area

1/ By Robert J. Lavell, Statistical and Historical Research Branch, AMS.

2/ Reports No. 1-5, 1955 Household Food Consumption Survey. The 3 previous articles that appeared in The National Food Situation are: "Food Consumption in the South," NFS-79, February 1957; "Food Consumption in the North Central Region," NFS-80, May 1957; and "Food Consumption of Households in the Northeast," NFS-81, July 1957.

3/ Includes the States from Montana south to New Mexico and all west of that line.

included, and the likely difference in food consumption patterns between the Pacific Coast States and Mountain States that cannot be measured by data from this survey. Further, because only a little over 10 percent of the U. S. household population lived in the West, fewer interviews were made there than in the other regions. Consequently, the sample is too thin in some income groups for reliable averages of use of minor individual items. 4/

#### Average Expenditures for Food

In the West, average expenditures per person for all foods combined increased for households in successively higher income groups in the urban and rural nonfarm categories (table 5). Farm household expenditures did

Table 5.- Average expense per person for all food used at home, households of 2 or more persons grouped by urbanization and income, in the West, in a week, spring 1955 1/

Urbanization group	1954 family money income after income taxes									
	All	Under \$2- 2/	\$2,000	\$3- 3,000	\$4- 4,000	\$5- 5,000	\$6- 6,000	\$8- 8,000	\$10,000 and over	
	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.
Urban	8.23	6.49	6.49	7.03	7.45	8.08	8.92	9.07	12.22	
Rural nonfarm	7.78	5.59		7.33		7.63			10.74	
Farm	4.87	5.13		4.73		4.57			5.62	

1/ From Food Consumption of Households in the West, Report No. 5, 1955 Household Food Consumption Survey.

2/ Includes some households not classified by income.

not increase much with income because money income is not as important a factor for them. The rate of increase in the West was about the same as in the other regions. Allocation of the food dollar among individual food items and food groups, likewise, was similar in all regions. For example comparison of the allocation of the food dollar in the West, given in table 6, with that in the North Central Region (given in an earlier article) reveals very few differences. In the West, a higher proportion is spent on lamb and mutton by households in all urbanization categories. 5/ A greater share was

4/ Table 1 in all survey reports contains the number of interviews in each income group within each urbanization category.

5/ The West and the Northeast are the only two regions in which much lamb was eaten. The article "Food Consumption of Households in the Northeast" notes the probable relationship between consumption of lamb and the proportion of foreign born or natives with foreign-born or mixed parentage who came from high lamb consuming countries.

Table 6.- Share of selected foods in food expense for home use,  
households of 2 or more persons grouped by urbanization,  
in the West, in a week, spring 1955 1/

Item	Urban	Rural nonfarm	Farm
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Beef	12.0	13.2	6.6
Pork	8.3	7.8	7.1
Lamb, mutton	1.5	3.3	2.3
Chicken	3.9	2.8	2.2
Eggs	4.5	4.3	2.7
Fluid whole milk	8.0	8.4	3.9
Potatoes 2/	1.8	2.2	3.0
Fresh vegetables 3/	5.4	4.9	5.4
Frozen vegetables 4/	.9	.7	.6
Canned vegetables 4/	2.0	2.7	3.7
Fresh fruits	5.3	4.1	6.5
Canned fruits 4/	1.8	1.6	2.0
Fruit and vegetable juices	1.7	1.3	1.8
Flour and cereal products	3.1	4.0	6.8
Bakery products	7.1	6.7	8.3
Fats and oils 5/	4.2	4.4	6.5
Sugar and sweets	3.0	3.5	4.4
Other food items 6/	25.5	24.1	26.2
Total expense for food at home 7/	100.0	100.0	100.0

1/ Derived from data in Food Consumption of Households in the West, Report No. 5, 1955 Household Food Consumption Survey.

2/ Includes small amounts of sweetpotatoes.

3/ Excludes potatoes and sweetpotatoes.

4/ Commercially frozen or canned.

5/ Includes butter.

6/ Includes all other meat, vegetables, fruits, etc. not listed separately.

7/ Excludes expense for alcoholic beverages.

spent on eggs, too, in all urbanization categories in the West compared to the North Central Region. Farm households in the West spent a greater share of their food dollar on fresh vegetables than did farm households in the North Central Region because the latter group raised much more of their own vegetables than did those in the West.

#### Patterns of Food Consumption

The 1955 survey supplies a great deal of information for use in the study of relationships between amounts of individual foods and food groups used and family income of households within urban, rural nonfarm, and farm categories (table 7). Use per person of such commodities as beef, fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables, and fluid whole milk increased in households with successively higher incomes. Use of flour, sugar, dried fruits and vegetables, and potatoes decreased. These are similar to consumption patterns in the rest of the country. The only noteworthy exception in the West in patterns of consumption rates with respect to income was that use of pork products increased in the upper income groups, especially consumption per person of cured ham and canned pork, which was largely ham.

Though patterns of use with respect to income were similar, average rates of use of many food items by each income group of households were different in the West than in the other regions. Some of these differences were caused by differences in supply and some by differences in makeup of the population and manner of living in the West compared with the other regions. For example, consumption of beef was generally higher in the West than in comparable urbanization and income groups in the North Central Region, but less pork and lard was used per person in the West in spite of the difference in pattern of consumption with respect to income, mentioned above.

Urban and rural nonfarm households in the West used more fresh vegetables per person during the survey week than did households in the same urbanization categories in the North Central Region. North Central farm households used more fresh vegetables than did farm households in the West because they raised more of their own. Consumption per person of fluid whole milk was lower in urban households in the West than in urban households in comparable income groups in the North Central Region, but it was higher in farm households in the West than in farm households in the North Central Region.

Information is also available in the reports on the survey on another aspect of patterns of food use--the proportion of households using a food item during the survey week. From such data we find, for instance, that a greater proportion of urban households in the West reported using fresh citrus fruit than did urban households in the North Central Region, but a smaller proportion of western households used frozen concentrated orange juice. A higher proportion of urban households in the West reported using dried fruit and canned fruit, also. These differences probably reflect preferences developed from past and present availability of the commodities.

Table 7.- Consumption per person of selected foods at home, households of 2 or more persons grouped by urbanization and income, in the West, in a week, spring 1955 1/

Food item	Unit	All	1954 family money income after income taxes							
			Under \$2,000	\$2-3,000	\$3-4,000	\$4-5,000	\$5-6,000	\$6-8,000	\$8-10,000	\$10,000 and over
Beef										
Urban	Pounds	1.53	1.37	0.91	1.38	1.49	1.77	1.46	1.90	1.99
Rural nonfarm	do.	1.92	.98		1.82		1.85		2.99	
Farm	do.	1.74	1.82		1.53		1.62		2.27	
Pork										
Urban	do.	1.01	.68	.70	1.04	.92	.97	.99	1.08	1.52
Rural nonfarm	do.	1.00	.96		.98		.91		1.28	
Farm	do.	.88	1.01		.83		.64		.91	
Lamb										
Urban	do.	.16	.16	.24	.15	.08	.14	.12	.18	.29
Rural nonfarm	do.	.04	.00		.01		.03		.13	
Farm	do.	.10	.11		.00		.17		.01	
Chicken										
Urban	do.	.55	.38	.33	.38	.53	.67	.39	.96	.80
Rural nonfarm	do.	.50	.45		.54		.35		.85	
Farm	do.	.66	.58		.59		.51		.72	
Eggs										
Urban	Dozens	.62	.63	.65	.61	.57	.61	.64	.74	.66
Rural nonfarm	do.	.72	.48		.76		.71		.78	
Farm	do.	.85	.91		.91		.80		.82	
Fresh vegetables 3/										
Urban	Pounds	2.78	3.23	2.68	2.23	2.63	2.53	3.14	3.26	3.32
Rural nonfarm	do.	2.69	2.20		2.96		2.29		2.83	
Farm	do.	2.27	2.38		1.91		2.18		2.88	
Frozen vegetables 4/										
Urban	do.	.21	.22	.13	.15	.18	.12	.25	.38	.39
Rural nonfarm	do.	.17	.04		.12		.13		.47	
Farm	do.	.08	.04		.08		.09		.11	
Canned vegetables 4/										
Urban	do.	.77	.63	.82	.89	.70	.95	.73	.75	.68
Rural nonfarm	do.	1.14	1.26		1.17		1.02		1.53	
Farm	do.	1.03	1.19		1.04		.97		.96	
Potatoes 5/										
Urban	do.	1.51	1.61	1.59	1.61	1.43	1.48	1.59	1.04	1.56
Rural nonfarm	do.	2.04	1.90		2.04		1.85		2.53	
Farm	do.	2.32	2.19		2.04		2.02		2.54	
Fresh fruit										
Urban	do.	3.25	3.21	2.52	2.29	3.01	3.09	4.01	3.33	5.27
Rural nonfarm	do.	2.71	1.96		2.69		2.73		2.96	
Farm	do.	3.12	3.38		3.07		3.57		2.69	
Canned fruit 4/										
Urban	do.	.63	.60	.58	.55	.61	.70	.83	.85	.48
Rural nonfarm	do.	.54	.33		.48		.53		.91	
Farm	do.	.43	.55		.29		.36		.68	
Fruit and vegetable juices 6/										
Urban	do.	1.22	.67	.68	1.06	1.15	1.21	1.58	1.40	1.68
Rural nonfarm	do.	.99	.48		.79		1.20		1.70	
Farm	do.	.91	1.00		.96		.71		.96	
Fluid whole milk										
Urban	Quarts	2.98	2.44	2.00	2.88	3.18	3.29	3.26	2.57	3.09
Rural nonfarm	do.	3.34	2.39		3.51		3.42		3.01	
Farm	do.	4.53	4.60		3.53		4.71		4.06	
Flour and cereal products										
Urban	Pounds	1.29	1.13	1.70	1.63	1.30	1.08	1.33	.93	1.06
Rural nonfarm	do.	1.82	2.37		1.68		2.03		1.27	
Farm	do.	2.10	2.31		2.04		2.18		1.63	
Bakery products										
Urban	do.	2.19	2.13	1.96	2.10	2.16	2.33	2.40	2.25	2.31
Rural nonfarm	do.	2.16	1.85		2.24		1.89		2.70	
Farm	do.	1.80	1.65		2.06		1.71		1.96	
Fat and oils 7/										
Urban	do.	.88	.88	.85	.90	.90	.84	.89	1.04	.92
Rural nonfarm	do.	1.01	.84		1.04		1.05		.99	
Farm	do.	.98	.93		.99		.93		1.01	
Sugar and sweets										
Urban	do.	1.12	.96	.91	1.26	1.19	1.14	1.11	.92	1.27
Rural nonfarm	do.	1.30	1.30		1.26		1.11		.97	
Farm	do.	1.53	1.62		1.58		1.16		1.50	
Average 1954 family money income after income taxes										
Urban	Dollars	6,033	961	2,489	3,593	4,469	5,463	6,937	8,886	17,765
Rural nonfarm	do.	4,105	1,472		3,104		4,818		8,104	
Farm	do.	3,822	236		3,112		4,803		8,883	
Distribution of households by income class 8/										
Urban	Percent	100.0	6.6	9.9	15.6	21.8	15.9	13.9	6.0	10.3
Rural nonfarm	do.	100.0	10.5	45.3			31.6		12.6	
Farm	do.	100.0	24.6		31.1		27.9		16.4	

1/ Derived from data in *Food Consumption of Households in the West*, Report No. 5, 1955 Household Food Consumption Survey.  
 21 meals at home equivalent to one person. 2/ Includes some households not classified by income. 3/ Excludes potatoes and sweetpotatoes.  
 4/ Commercially canned or frozen. Excludes potatoes and sweetpotatoes. 5/ Includes small amounts of sweetpotatoes.  
 6/ Single-strength equivalent. Includes home-made vegetable juices; otherwise commercially prepared. 7/ Includes butter.  
 8/ Excludes households not reporting income.

A major factor in the higher consumption rate of lamb in the West compared to the North Central Region was that twice as large a proportion of urban households in the West ate lamb during the survey week as urban households in the North Central Region.

#### Home Production

Home-produced food is less important in the West than in any of the other regions, both because of the small farm population and the fact that farm households in the West generally did not raise as much of their own food as did those in the other regions. Findings of the survey indicate that farm households in the West consumed about the same amount per person of home-produced beef, fluid whole milk, chicken and eggs as did farm households in the North Central Region, but less home-produced pork, and less fruits and vegetables (table 8). Though home production of food in general was not as important in the West as in the other regions, it was very important to farm households for some commodities. About three-fourths of the milk used by farm households in the West was home produced, two-thirds of the chicken and eggs, and about 60 percent of the beef. On the average, low-income farm households used more home-produced milk, eggs and fresh vegetables per person than did farm households in the upper income groups. There was no noticeable pattern of use with respect to income for other home-produced commodities.

Table 8.- Quantity of selected home-produced foods used at home per person and share of total use from home production, farm households of 2 or more persons, in the West, in a week, spring 1955 1/

Item	Beef	Pork	Chicken	Eggs	Fluid whole milk	Fresh white potato toes	Fresh vegetables	Fresh fruit
	Lb.	Lb.	Lb.	Doz.	Qt.	Lb.	Lb.	Lb.
Quantity used per person:	1.05	.27	.46	.57	3.56	.37	.47	.67
Share of total use from:								
home production	60	30	70	67	78	16	20	22

1/ Derived from data in Food Consumption of Households in the West, Report No. 5, 1955 Household Food Consumption Survey.

2/ Excludes potatoes and sweetpotatoes.

#### Other Factors Affecting Western Food Consumption

Though degree of urbanization, family income, and household size are the major influences on consumption rates, there are other factors that have been measured in the 1955 survey reports that also affect consumption rates.

Composition of households, i.e. the proportion of household members in each sex-age group, also affected consumption rates. 6/ In the West, the greatest proportion of children under 10 years old in all urbanization categories was in middle income groups (table 9). Generally, farm households had the greatest proportion of children and rural nonfarm households the least. The proportion of youths, 10 to 20 years old, increased in each successively higher income group in all urbanization categories, the highest in farm households.

Differences in the proportion of members in each of these age groups may have affected the consumption rates of some items as much as differences in family income. Urban households in the West with incomes of less than \$2,000 and those in the \$8-10,000 income group used more fresh vegetables per person during the survey week than urban households in the \$4-5,000 group. Those households in the bottom and top income groups had the lowest proportion of children and those in the middle income group had the highest. The effect of differences in household composition is also seen in the consumption rates of fluid whole milk. The middle income group, which had the largest proportion of young children, had the highest consumption rate for milk. The other two groups had much lower rates.

Differences in household composition did not seem to affect the consumption rate of such items as beef, where the rate increased steadily in households in successively higher income groups.

Another factor that may influence consumption rates is the distribution of families by family size. 7/ Larger families generally reap some advantage from economies of scale in purchasing and preparing food that 2-member families do not enjoy. In the West, the greatest proportion of large-size families was in the middle income groups, and the preponderance of 2-member families was in the under \$2,000 income group (table 9). The greatest proportion of farm families of all family sizes, except those of 6 or more members, was in the \$2,000 to \$4,000 income group. Farm families of 6 or more occurred more frequently in the next higher income group.

The tabulations necessary to measure the effect of these differences in distribution of families by family size on consumption rates of individual food items are being prepared by the Institute of Home Economics. Further discussion of this factor will be presented in The National Food Situation when these tabulations are available.

6/ Table 2 of Report No. 10, 1955 Household Food Consumption Survey, shows distribution of household members in more detailed age and sex groups.

7/ Table 1 in all of the reports on the survey contains the number of families of each family size.

Table 9.- Proportion of household members in selected age groups and proportion of households of each size, households of 2 or more persons grouped by urbanization and income, in the West, spring 1955 1/

Item	\$8,000 and over					
	All 2/		Under \$2,000	\$2-4,000	\$4-6,000	\$6-8,000
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Age of members						
Urban						
Adults (over 20)	59	79	57	56	61	64
Youths (10-20)	18	5	19	15	18	21
Children (under 10)	23	16	24	29	21	15
Total urban	100	100	100	100	100	100
Rural nonfarm						
Adults (over 20)	60	63	65	53	61	
Youths (10-20)	19	18	15	22	17	
Children (under 10)	21	19	20	25	22	
Total rural nonfarm	100	100	100	100	100	
Farm						
Adults (over 20)	54	65	52	47	54	
Youths (10-20)	20	15	23	22	24	
Children (over 10)	26	20	25	31	22	
Total farm	100	100	100	100	100	
Family size						
Urban						
2-member	35	75	34	30	36	33
3-member	24	25	31	23	21	16
4-member	21	---	19	21	29	29
5-member	11	---	8	16	5	14
6 or more	9	---	8	10	9	8
Total urban	100	100	100	100	100	100
Rural nonfarm						
2-member	40	50	53	20	33	
3-member	19	30	19	13	25	
4-member	14	---	5	27	25	
5-member	17	10	7	20	17	
6 or more	10	10	16	20	---	
Total rural nonfarm	100	100	100	100	100	
Farm						
2-member	21	37	21	12	10	
3-member	21	27	24	18	15	
4-member	21	20	18	21	30	
5-member	19	3	24	26	20	
6 or more	18	13	13	23	25	
Total farm	100	100	100	100	100	

1/ From 1955 Household Food Consumption Survey, Reports No. 5 and 10.

2/ Includes some households not classified by income.





